

# CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE

Science and Arts.

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS.

No. 349.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1860.

PRICE 1½d.

## VOS NON VOBIS.

ABOUT the year 1817, a worthy gentleman, who had fallen out of conceit with his country, migrated to America, purchased a tract of land in a back settlement, and set himself with all his energy to improve it. After a few years of extremely hard work, and no small hardship and suffering, he found things so far prospering with him, and the country generally getting on so well, that he thought he might safely venture on extending his possessions. On applying, however, at the land-office, he discovered that all the land around his estate had been bought up by a long-headed man, newly come to the country, who, having observed the effect of the first settler's active industry, foresaw that the neighbourhood must be a thriving one. The end of the matter was, that our first settler had to pay, for the addition to his estate, two or three extra prices: he was fined, as it were, for his own industry, while the seller was rewarded for another's sacrifices and deservings.

It seems a hard case; but it is only the type of a form of hardship which the community experiences in every progressive country, through a peculiarity connected with land-property. In all such countries, while the amount of land necessarily remains the same, the increase of the population and the increase of other kinds of wealth necessarily enhance its value. The owner of territory has only to wait quietly with his hands in his pockets, while others are working around him, sure that, as they get numerous and rich, they will confer a new extrinsic value on the soil, through their dependence on it for food, and their desires and needs for the possession of parcels of it; thus becoming enriched at their expense, and with no necessary merit on his own part. The workers, in fact, have to suffer for the consequences of their own industry; the new mouths may be said to pay a toll for permission to exist on the soil. There is, indeed, a competition from landowners out of the country, provided that foreign food is allowed to be imported. But nearness of situation, and other local circumstances, tell here in a serious way. A man who desires to have a piece of ground for a new factory, or a house, or the means of rural recreation and enjoyment, must have it near the place where his concerns are, or he cannot have it at all. The land within a few miles of the populous town has a great advantage, in the supply of food to that place, over any amount of country situated beyond seas. The landowner, in short, becomes a monopolist, because everything besides geographical space can be, and usually is, multiplied.

No one, or scarcely any one, is disposed to challenge

the right of property in the soil. It is a privilege in no serious danger anywhere. But there may be limitations which the general interest calls for being imposed upon it. A principle equally sacred with property, is that which declares that he who works deserves to enjoy the results of his labours, and no other person. Just consider for a moment the relation of the population to the soil. We see, in some sequestered valley, an Industry arise, we scarcely can tell how—a weaving of woollens, a making of paper, or an iron-foundry. In its creation, whosoever may have been concerned, it is never the landowners. Yet, by and by, we see these gentlemen benefiting largely by the increased local demand for food, and probably letting out their acres for building purposes, at handsome ground-rents, all without the slightest exertion or sacrifice on their part—on the contrary, they have most probably, through pride and prejudice, thrown all possible obstructions in the way of the Industry, and only been won by large bribes to allow it the additional space it requires. Or we see a little creek become, in the course of half a century, through some accidental circumstances, a large port, but only so through the expenditure of immense sums by the inhabitants for the purchase of dock-space and lands for buildings, from an owner who had not the least share of merit in any part of the history of the enterprise. Or take simply a population like that of London, which, having once attained a certain magnitude, goes on irresistibly, from forces resting within itself, continually, of course, calling for more land over which to extend itself. The people must obtain the land adjoining that already built upon, and the urgency of their demands of course dictates the estimate put upon it. The owner stipulates not merely for a rent several multiples of the agricultural value of the land, but requires that the property built upon it shall be his own at the end of a century. It is these hard terms for ground to live upon which form the chief basis of the noted dearness of living in all large cities, each man having to charge more for his labour, and for every article he sells, in order to make up for the enhanced cost of his dwelling.

The matter is softened to us in appearance, by the gradual nature of the rise in the value of land. Extending over generations, and distributed over a succession of proprietors, it does not in general affect us as a great iniquity on the part of any individual. But, in reality, the fact of a value arising through the industry and merit of others, is not extenuated by the number who have participated in the undeserved benefit. Whether the case be such as occurs in the heart of London, where bits of land have, after two thousand years, come to sell at the rate of £180,000

per acre, as lately happened in a remarkable instance, or an American adventurer buys a hundred and sixty acres of land at forty pounds, and finds it in eight years worth about forty thousand, through no merit of his, but merely in consequence of a town called Chicago rising upon it in the meantime (a fact)—the absurdity is equally glaring. All such increment of value is clearly conferred by the community, and the benefit is realised by a different party.

There is an acknowledgment of the truth of what is here set down, in the estimate usually put upon land. In this country it is scarcely ever to be had at a price to yield more than 3 per cent., being considerably below the profit to be derived from other investments. Its value is thus declared to be in a great degree prospective. Its possessors know that it cannot be made greater in quantity, and that these poor toilers who live upon it, will always be more and more pressed to obtain pieces of it, and more and more under a dependence upon it for food. They consequently look for a price above the level of the current value of other things, and that price is freely given. It has, accordingly, come to be recognised as the most suitable investment for families possessing hereditary rank, and for the funds of institutions designed to be permanent. Every owner of it may be said to have a *lien* upon the future industry of the country.

It seems pretty clear that there is an error and an evil here, one which, if carried to its utmost, would make the owning of land intolerable to the community. It may therefore be expected that, ere long, the means of imposing a check upon it consistent with acquired rights will have to be considered in all advanced communities. In America, even now, efforts are sometimes made to lessen it, by the members of an infant township buying up, in their joint names, a large parcel of the neighbouring land. The evil might be considerably softened in our own country, if town-corporations were more generally the holders of the adjoining property, and were to apply the results of the enhanced value for purposes of general utility. Meanwhile some good will have been accomplished, if these remarks should awaken the large land-owners to a sense of the peculiar nature of their property, and impress them with the duty which is incumbent upon them, of making their monopoly interfere as little as possible with the free movements of the labouring part of the community.

#### NELLY MACADAM.

IN the beginning of the year 1796, Nelly Macadam came to live as general servant and maid-of-all-work with the Misses Campbell of Partick House. The Misses Campbell were two maiden sisters on the high road to fifty, but in excellent preservation. Both were tall and gaunt as they had ever been, with the precise and somewhat stately manner becoming to ladies of their family; for the Misses Campbell could count relationship to the ducal House of Argyll. The reckoning, indeed, would have puzzled anybody out of Scotland; it was long and rather intricate; but the maiden sisters understood and explained the subject when occasion required; and their neighbours with one accord allowed that they were born gentlewomen. Partick House was their paternal inheritance; it had descended to them from the Campbells of Partick, whose latest scions they were; but the mansion and farm appended had been leased to a certain Captain Hardy from the north of Ireland, who, having retired on half-pay, and with a considerable number of boys and girls, rented the place, and lived there in free-and-easy style, till his girls got married, his boys got

commissions under favour of the French war, and he departed this life sincerely regretted by numerous and despairing creditors. The Misses Campbell could not let their house to people of inferior rank; it was growing too old and out of fashion for modern gentry, so they removed from the Saltmarket in Glasgow, where they had occupied a third flat with great gentility for almost thirty years, and took possession of their family mansion. It was situated in a solitary hollow, a good Scotch mile from the old village of Partick, then of smaller dimensions and less resort than it is at present—a house of two low stories, with small windows and a thatched roof, built in the primitive style of Scottish manor-houses, itself forming the centre, its offices the two wings. And the interior arrangements corresponded with the external. There was a great kitchen or *ha'*, with the indispensable dresser and wide chimney; from it opened on either side the best and the second parlour, the former having in its rear the best pantry, the latter, the Misses Campbell's bedroom; while behind the kitchen lay the dairy, the larder, and a small room thought particularly suitable for the servant-maid, as it communicated with the barn, and thence with the cow-house, so that the outdoor duties might be performed without risk of storm or snow, a consideration not to be overlooked in the west-country winters. The white-washed walls and earthen-floor of this chamber, its window of minute diamond-shaped panes set in a leaden sash, its settle supplied with a chaff-bed and a tartan quilt, were esteemed suitable accommodations for a servant of a genteel family in those days.

There Nelly set up her wardrobe and her toilet—the former consisting of a stout oaken chest, wherein, besides her providing of linen, kept in store against the wedding which every woman is said to expect, was her Sunday-suit, including the Bible and Psalm-book, without which, being a true Presbyterian, Nelly never went to kirk. Nelly was a Lanarkshire lass, robust, rosy, and good-humoured. Her neat short-gown, plaid-petticoat, white handkerchief, and nut-brown hair, always smooth and shining, her fair face, with its pleasant honest look, gained for Nelly the general estimate of a trig bonny lass. She might have been a rustic belle in her own class; but Nelly had been brought up a strict Cameronian, trained to avoid trysts and merry-makings. Moreover, the girl was an orphan, had no relations nearer than some Highland cousins in Argyllshire, and had been at service from her thirteenth year. The Misses Campbell had taken her from a respectable farmhouse, where she had served seven terms. It was no small promotion for Nelly, and had not been attained without a lengthy negotiation, which was at last concluded by a treaty, the special articles of which were, that she should look after the cow and her milk—the Misses Campbell kept but one crummock—make hay for her at midsummer, polish the mahogany in the best parlour once a fortnight, spin six cuts of yarn every day, and receive as wages five pounds a year. From these stipulations, it may be observed that the honour of Nelly's office somewhat exceeded its profit.

The Misses Campbell's incomings consisted of rent paid in kind for the farm attached to their house—which they had let to a wealthy neighbour, with skill and capital to till it—and also the returns of the flat in the Saltmarket, in which a Glasgow merchant had established himself as their tenant. With such revenues, it could not be expected that their housekeeping would be on a liberal scale; but ladies of good family could do with meat on Thursdays and tea on Sundays in those times. Their black satin gowns had been bought when they visited Edinburgh under the conduct of their father the major, who died before the American war, and had required no alteration for fifteen years. Moreover, they had the mahogany which Nelly was to polish; a tea-service

of real china, left them by their grandmother; together with a silver tea-pot, which saw the light only on occasions of extraordinary state, and was a cause of ceaseless anxiety to its fair possessors, on account of the covetous hands it might attract to their solitary mansion. It has also to be noted that the Misses Campbell were remarkably fine spinners; and practised their art with such good effect, that the dealers in linen-yarn throughout the country easily recognised their smooth wiry thread, and were willing to give the best price for it. With so many helps and holdings, the Misses Campbell did not consider themselves poor. If their incomes were small, their expenses were also few. Their tenant-farm supplied them with oatmeal for the porridge, peat for the fire, and flax for spinning; the Glasgow merchant enabled them to purchase foreign luxuries in the shape of tea and sugar; and a single field which they had retained, supplied the summer grass and winter hay for Nelly's charge in the byre. The provender and the produce were equally well managed. They had their satins for Sundays, and the china and silver tea-pot to bring forth from the carefully locked cupboard, when they were visited by their nephew the captain.

The gentleman so called was properly a lieutenant in the preventive service. He had been what is known in Scotland as a ne'er-do-weel, in his youth. That was passed, for the nephew's age was little under his aunts', as will sometimes happen in extensive families, and reformation or sobriety had come with his discreet days; but he was still a bachelor, able to spend more than his income and perquisites—preventive officers could boast of such things then—and impatiently waiting for the death of an uncle in Fife, who, as the captain expressed it, 'kept him out of his property'—a house and farm strongly resembling the estate of the Campbells of Partick.

Life in the latter mansion was a prudent and primitive business; early to bed and early to rise were among its chief rules of action. The Misses Campbell spun in the second parlour, and Nelly in the kitchen; the elder sister, Miss Peggy, superintended the dairy, cow-house, and outdoor transactions; the younger, Miss Betty, kept a keen eye on all domestic matters, from the making of the barley-broth to the locking up of the china. There was an appointed day for the putting on of the kail-pot, another for the kirk, and no extremity of wind or weather was permitted to prevent the ladies and their servants from attending their respective kirks every Sunday. The Misses Campbell walked in all the state of beaver-hats and pattens to their parish-church, as by law established. Nelly, with no less regularity, and perhaps more fervour, repaired to an old house standing among fields, and inexpensively fitted up as the meeting-house of a Cameronian congregation, who regarded themselves as the upholders of the Covenant; spoke of the dominant church as the indulged; and were at once proud of, and edified by, the ministrations of an earnest and laborious man, whose grandfather had suffered in the Grassmarket. There was little variety, and less time to feel the want of it. Though within a short distance of the busy town of Glasgow, Partick House had an out-of-the-world position. Removed from the highway, with no neighbours nearer than half a mile, its news was gathered at kirk or market, for Miss Peggy sometimes attended the latter in the village for the purchase of mutton and like rarities. Occasionally, too, a travelling-chapman exchanged the gossip of the country for the very small purchases the Misses Campbell made. There were, besides, half-yearly visits to Glasgow, for the purpose of collecting what the ladies called their rents. But their chief source of intelligence concerning the great world was Captain Campbell, who, being stationed at Greenock, usually visited his aunts about

once a quarter. His coming created a mighty sensation in that quiet household. The state bedroom—the only one in use in the second story—was opened and aired for his reception; the china was brought out, the tea-pot exhibited, the best parlour put in occupation; and Miss Hamilton, a maiden lady of family almost equal to their own, and with something in the Glasgow Bank, was invited from her house in Partick to take tea, and be seen home by the gallant captain, whose designs in that quarter his aunts considered very discreet. It was their fashionable season. Yet the captain's visit had one unlucky effect. He brought them such terrible disclosures of the state of the times, how the French were overrunning the world, and would certainly invade Scotland—how the Irish were in rebellion, and the Papists were determined to extirpate the Protestants—and what villainous intentions the Radicals of Glasgow had against all loyal subjects and people of good family, that the poor sisters felt not only the silver tea-pot but their own lives in danger; and they kept a double watch, after the captain's departure, on the doors and windows of their solitary house, which neither chapman nor beggar was permitted to enter on any pretext.

Nelly had the smallest share of these terrors. Her work was heavier, and her slumber sounder, yet she never concluded operations for the day without seeing that the outer door of the cow-house—the most accessible point in the rear of the mansion—was securely bolted with two strong iron bars, which made it fast above and below. Nelly, as well as her employers, was most particular about this duty when the long winter nights set in. Her service at Partick House had commenced in the spring; but the spring had worn into summer, and the summer into harvest, the hay had been made and gathered in, the dairy duties had been done to Miss Peggy's satisfaction, Miss Betty was well pleased with her polishing the mahogany, and her execution of the six cuts, and she had been re-engaged at the November term. The captain paid one of his alarming visits about a month after. He came in the middle of the week, remained till Saturday, and promised to return on the following Friday, as particular business called him to Edinburgh; but never were the captain's tales more full of terror, and he specially dwelt on the number of Irish rebels who had come over to Scotland, partly to avoid the vengeance of the government, and partly to combine with the Radicals in their wicked designs.

'I shouldn't wonder,' he said, 'that some of them would be lurking about here: it's a lonely place. Take my advice: if you see any suspicious-looking man, disguised like, and as if in hiding, send word quietly to Major Stuart, in Partick, and he'll send some of his soldiers to look after him.'

It was a troubled time; the towns were full of party agitation, the contentions of the Whigs and Tories embroiled the rural districts, and were heard at fair and market; the government was jealous of every movement in the direction of reform; its agents and spies were on the look-out in every corner; companies of soldiers were stationed in every village; and quiet timid people like the Misses Campbell knew not what to fear. Nelly's mind was full of these matters when she retired to rest on the Sunday night after the captain's departure. Her minister had made serious and almost prophetic reflections on the times; her neighbours had given her scraps of alarming intelligence from the *Glasgow Post*; and the night had set in with a fearful storm from the north-west, accompanied with sleet and snow. The doors were all safely barred. Nelly had said her prayers, not without a sincere thanksgiving that she had rest and shelter in such a night; but the blasts which shook the whole house, and drove volumes of snow against her window, would not let the poor girl sleep. At last there was a temporary lull, and a



dreamy sense of slumber was stealing over her, when she was startled broad awake by something like a suppressed groan. Nelly raised herself, and listened. It was not the wind moaning in the chimneys, for she heard it again, and, at the same time, a low rustling among the hay, which convinced her there was something in the barn. In common with all the peasantry of Scotland, Nelly had heard a good deal about ghaists and bogles. She remembered that the cow-house door, by which alone entrance could be effected to the barn, had been barred for hours, yet she could distinctly hear a sound of steps and movements beyond the partition, and the groans became louder. Nelly was a brave girl, and had a good conscience. Whatever might be there, she resolved to see it. There was a rush-light in the kitchen; and having lighted it at the embers, carefully covered with the peat-ashes for the next day's fire, she solemnly commended herself to the protection of Providence, threw on the readiest of her garments, and stepped into the barn with the cold sweat hanging on her brow. All seemed dark and silent there; but on closer examination, a heap of hay in the further corner was not exactly as she had left it; and as she approached nearer, Nelly's eye caught the dim outline of a man's figure, stretched at his length, and half concealed between the hay and the wall. Nelly knew that was no ghaist, but it might be a robber in search of the silver tea-pot. There was no use in giving the alarm; the Misses Campbell would be much more terrified than herself; no neighbour could hear their united shrieks; and how many more men might be in the barn! While these thoughts passed through her mind, Nelly became aware that the man had fixed his eyes on her, and was rising, but so slowly, that something must be wrong with him.

'Make no noise, and don't be afraid,' he said; and his voice sounded so low and feeble, that Nelly felt there was little danger to be apprehended from him. 'Come near, and let me speak to you. I mean no harm to the house, nor anybody in it, but I have nowhere else to go from the fearful storm, and have crept in here. Will you let me stay till the morning?'

'For Gude's sake, sir, what's the matter wi' ye?' said Nelly, for she now perceived that the man, who was sitting half up, had the dress and appearance of a gentleman, though his clothes were dust and weather soiled. Nelly also saw that he was young and handsome; but his black hair, which he wore without queue or powder, lay in wet masses about the face, which want or sickness had made ghastly pale.

'You're a good girl, I think, and won't betray me,' he said, after a long look at her—'so I'll tell you what's the matter. I'm hiding for my life. I was one of the United Irishmen, and the government have set a price upon my head. I got over to Glasgow in a fishing-smack from Lough Foyle, thinking to be safe there, but the informers are on my track. I have been hiding for a fortnight past in the woods and moors; and for fear of dying with cold, I crept in here. I happen to know the house, for a friend of my father's once lived in it. Will you befriend me? and God will reward you, if I never can.'

There was a mighty conflict between fear and charity in Nelly's mind. Here was one of the Irish rebels, of whom the captain had told such terrible tales. Who knew what confederates he might have ready to murder the household in their beds, and carry off the silver tea-pot! Yet his drenched torn clothes, and look of want and suffering, went to the woman's heart, and she answered: 'Deed, sir, if ye had any better friends to go till, I would advise you no to stay here; there might be government-men comin' about the place, and I dinna think ye could be hidden.'

'Well, my girl,' said the stranger, evidently guessing with whom he had to deal, 'there are two hundred pounds reward for my apprehension; you may get it by betraying me.'

'I ne'er heard that the price o' blood profited any

that got it, and I dinna want the like; but I'm sorry for you, sir, and the night's fearful'. If you would just come up to this corner, I'll gie ye ane of my blankets, and cover ye up till the morn.'

'God bless you, my girl!' said the stranger, moving up to the appointed corner; and Nelly saw that he was tall as well as handsome, but so faint that he could scarcely stand. 'For charity's sake, will you give me something to eat? I have tasted nothing for the last two days.' Nelly hesitated for a minute. There was little left from under lock and key in that economical house: some cold porridge, indeed, remained on the dresser; it was not hers to give; but the man was starving. He joyfully accepted the offer; and when she stole out to the kitchen, and brought him a portion, small enough not to be missed by Miss Betty, the reliah with which he despatched that unsavoury morsel, convinced the sensible girl that she had done no wrong. Her next operation was to bring a blanket from her own bed, cover up the stranger with it, and an extra layer of hay. 'Now, sir,' said she, 'tak a guid sleep, and the Lord hae a care o' baith you and me. I'll let you out early. But you didna tell me how you got in?'

'When the cow-house door was open, before daylight fell,' said the worn-out man; but his tones were already mingled with the heavy breathings of sleep; and after a careful look round the barn, to see that all was safe, Nelly retired to her own chamber. The storm had abated, but it was long before she could compose herself to sleep, though now pretty sure that there was no danger to the family or the silver tea-pot to be apprehended from the stranger. She knew the Misses Campbell well enough to be aware that his concealment in the barn would bring down their deadly displeasure on her. No protestations would ever persuade them that she had not given him admittance, and there also lay risk and peril to the good name which Nelly valued as the jewel of her poverty. She prayed fervently for direction in this great strait, and having thus resigned her troubles to Providence, the honest girl slept soundly till daybreak.

At earliest dawn she was once more in the barn to wake the stranger, and send him in search of another hiding-place. But the snow was lying some two feet deep; the wind still blew keenly from the north-west; the day was struggling faintly through a grim and murky sky; and the man slept so soundly and looked so tired, that Nelly had not the heart to wake him. Where could he go in such weather, and what would become of him? All the fears and reckonings of the previous night again came over her, but she could not turn him out. The more she thought and prayed on the subject, according to her pious custom, the more was Nelly convinced that her duty, however difficult and dangerous, was to allow him to remain. Having reached this conviction, Nelly took measures for his concealment from the inspecting eyes of Miss Peggy. There was a stack of straw at the further end of the barn; Nelly had built it with her own hands; and out of the side next the wall she drew out as many large sheaves as left a hiding-place for her uninvited guest, the entrance being protected by sundry large bundles of flax piled up for the winter's spinning.

'Creep in here, sir,' she said, after rousing him with a considerable shake. 'Miss Peggy'll be comin' to look after me and the cow; ye can lie here till the snaw an' the informers gang their ways.'

The sound sleep and the cold porridge had done wonders for the unlucky man; his strength seemed partially restored, and his gratitude to Nelly was boundless. He joyfully accepted the shelter offered him in the straw-stack, and explained to her that if he could remain concealed till the search after him subsided, it was his hope to get off in one of the American ships then lying at Glasgow, the captain of which was his friend.

'Weel, sir,' said Nelly, 'I'll do what I can to hide you. For your ain sake, I'll warn you to keep quiet. You'll get the biggest half o' a' my meals; I canna steal, you ken; and as rebellion has brought you to a' this strait, I hope you'll get grace to repent, and live the rest o' your days a loyal subject to your king, and mair particularly to the King Eternal.'

It was Providence, in Nelly's opinion, that kept Miss Peggy so much out of the barn and byre that week; the weather was cold, and the ladies had by this time a considerable confidence in their maid. The days passed with variations of frost and thaw. Nelly made the porridge, and milked the cow, and spun her six cuts, as if she had no secret in the barn to keep; but her compact regarding the biggest half of her meals was religiously kept. The stranger grew stronger day by day. The warning to keep quiet never had to be repeated, for he knew his danger, and only crept out after dark, when all was shut up, to walk in the barn by moonlight, for Nelly would allow him no other illumination. She sat up, however, to mend his torn clothes; gave him all the shawls and blankets she could spare; lent him her Bible and Psalm-book, to read in his solitude; and occasionally gave him sound, though very short lectures on the necessity of amending his ways. As most men in similar circumstances would do, he promised all sorts of reformation, and gave Nelly abundant thanks. At length, in the fervour of his gratitude, he said: 'Nelly, I am a gentleman's son, and if I ever recover my position, I promise to marry you!'

'Deed, sir, you'll promise na sic thing,' said Nelly. 'Promises made in danger are seldom weel kept; and maybe you would be na great bargain for an honest lass. But I'll aye be glad to hear o' your weel doin'.'

The Misses Campbell were beginning to wonder why Nelly looked so white and hungry-like, when their nephew the captain returned from his business in Edinburgh. He had stayed a week longer than he intended, and brought a large supply of news concerning the times. He was relating part of it as Nelly waited at breakfast next morning, and entered into full particulars regarding a young man named Gordon Grey, the son of a gentleman of property near Belfast, who had joined the rebels in spite of his family, and after obtaining an ensign's commission. 'There is two hundred pounds reward for his apprehension,' said the captain, 'and the search was hot after him about Glasgow. He was some sort of a cousin to your former tenant old Hardy; that is what made him hide in the west country, I suppose; but they think he has gone over to Fife now.'

While the Misses Campbell were giving utterance to their fervent hopes that Grey, with all other rebels, might be taken and brought to justice, Nelly almost danced for joy beside the kitchen-fire. She knew he was the man in the barn, and the search about Glasgow was over. The stormy weather had settled into a hard clear frost; two hours before day next morning, the stranger had eaten the last of her porridge, saved over night for his supply; and disguised in a complete suit of her everyday clothes, short-gown, tartan shawl, and cap, in which Nelly said he looked 'unco weel,' he unbarred the cow-house door for his own exit, heartily shook hands with his most hospitable hostess, made protestations of everlasting gratitude and remembrance—which she cut short with an admonition to 'get till America,' and let her hear of his 'weel doin'—and departed on his way to Glasgow. A passing chapman, three days after, told Nelly that a sailor bade him say her cousin was safe down the Clyde, and would no doubt land in New York.

Nelly's thanksgiving for that deliverance was often renewed; but time passed away, summers and winters went and came, still finding her in the genteel service of the Misses Campbell. The captain's news

passed from rebels and Radicals to the battles and sieges of the great French war. It was becoming Nelly's belief that the man who had promised so much would never be heard of more. The thought was not to her satisfaction; she had not forgotten the perilous days and restless nights which his safety cost her; perhaps the handsome young man was in her memory too; but what better could be expected from an Irishman and a rebel? She was musing over the subject at her wheel one day, when a neighbour's son called to tell her that the postmaster at Partick had an American letter for her. The Misses Campbell had never been more interested in any of their nephew's tales than they were in that startling event. But when Nelly had gone for the letter, duly read and considered it, she informed them it was from her lad, and he was 'doin' weel.' The household was kept lively from month to month with those American letters to Nelly, till at length one came with a bank-order in it, and she announced her determination to 'gang out in the *Fair Nancy*,' then plying between Glasgow and New York, 'and tak her lad, for he could na weel come for her.'

The Misses Campbell were not reconciled to parting with their faithful servant till the good souls learned, by a special disclosure, that Nelly's lad was a gentleman born, 'but had been left a wee to himself.' Nelly got ready, sailed in the *Fair Nancy*, and arrived safely; but the letter which announced that fact to the ladies she had served with so much credit, also contained the wedding-cards of Mr and Mrs Gordon Grey. Till the end of their days, it puzzled the Misses Campbell and their nephew to account for the fact; but when both sisters were gone, and the captain was an old man living on his Fife property—when Partick House was pulled down, after falling into great dilapidation, to make room for a newer mansion—when times were changed, and the strife was over abroad and at home, Gordon Grey, Esquire, and family returned to their paternal estate near Belfast, and repaid the clemency of government by leading a quiet and useful life. Mr Grey and his lady lived to be an aged pair, and see their children settled about them. They are still remembered with equal respect in the neighbourhood, which owes to them many local improvements; and its old people are partial to rehearsing the singular history of Nelly Macadam.

#### STORIES OF THE TURKISH HIPPODROME.

I SUPPOSE I had done something very wrong, or else the Turkish sun had a spite against me as a native of cold, foggy England, for he tried all he could to set me on fire; and finding me incombustible, he gave up the attempt, and contented himself with scorching my white Panama hat the rich coffee-coloured brown that a meerschauum pipe turns when mellowed by long smoking.

I was bound for the Atmeidan or Great Hippodrome of Constantinople, the site of the old chariot-races in the times of the early Greek emperors (532—600 A.D.), at once the Epsom Race-course and Rotten Row of the city of Constantine, that fair queen of the Bosphorus. I descended the crowded hill leading down from Missri's hotel at Pera, and crossed the bridge of boats that joins Stamboul to the Frank quarter. I stood for a moment to watch the toll-takers, with the huge hour-glasses at their elbows, and the hideous plastered mendicants who, squatting by the gate-houses, shouted verses of the Koran at passers-by, whether negro eunuchs, rich pashas, porters staggering under iron-banded bales, sturdy Turks with great crates full of live fowls on their heads, or wild-eyed, mad fakirs swinging their pumpkin-rind dishes. I climbed up the hills caused by the bridge-road rising over the arches; I traversed the valleys of the same road, where it sank down again between the arches; and escaping the heels of the line of hack-horses that

are always waiting on the Turkish side of the bridge, I mounted through various narrow streets, up one of the seven hills, and soon, taking a turn to the right of St Sophia, found myself in the Hippodrome.

The Atmeidan is not a square, but rather an oblong—a long, dusty strip of ground, with a mosque on one side, and flimsy houses on the other, covering much of that space which the forty chariots once traversed with fiery wheels, while Justinian and all the prelates and senators of Constantinople looked on from gilded balconies and silk-hung places of vantage. It is a lonely deserted spot now, very still and silent in the sunshine, far away from the crowded bazaars and the noisy coppersmith streets, from the baths and the coffee-shops; no sherbet-vendor pitches his stall there, no fruit-seller brings his unripe peaches, the eunuchs do not even come there to tame their fiery horses, nor do the veiled women walk there with their children. Where Belisarius and his veterans of the Persian and Illyrian wars slew thirty thousand rebels of the Green faction, in one of the great revolts caused by a riot at a chariot-race, is now a dusty enclosure, seldom traversed but by chance water-carriers, some vagrant soldiers on their way to their barracks, or watchmen going to relieve guard at the great fire-tower which is not far off.

On the left-hand side of the Hippodrome runs the low wall, pierced with square gratings, which bounds the mosque of Achmed, above which some funeral cypresses and cheerful planes rise with a refreshing sense of leafy growth that makes me at once a member of the Green faction, although the chariot-races have so long been over, and the Blue party exists no longer. I do not enter the mosque courtyard, because I know there will be nothing to see but a paved square, with a covered fountain in the middle, with a flutter of pigeons all round it, and some good-natured negress servants sitting at the gate, laughing. Nor do I care just now to get under shelter of the cloisters, or to mount the marble steps of the entrance, and take off my boots to shuffle bare-footed about an empty mosque, where there is little to see but strings of lamps, some enormous pillars, each nearly as big as the Campanile at Florence, and some blue porcelain wainscoting. I know there will be a man asleep under the pulpit, and there is sure to be a tall English farmhouse clock in the doorkeeper's little railed-off enclosure. No! but I want to have a good look at the great Egyptian granite obelisk of the Greek times that stands in the centre of the Hippodrome, resting on a pedestal bossy with figures, and supported by four slabs of copper. I want also to see the curious twisted copper snake-pillar that tradition says came from Delphi, and the great temple of Apollo there; I want also to have a view of that curious toppling pile of stones, like the shell of a column, that the Turks tell me was once covered with bronze tablets, recording the names of the winners in the chariot-races—a theory which, if not true, is not unlikely. They are the three choicest relics of the old Greek empire, and are of extreme interest to any one but a Turk. Even a Greek boy I speak to kindles up as he approaches the last of the three pillars, and says that there is treasure under that old work, and that he wishes he had the pulling of it down. I suppose if this tradition has any truth in it at all, it refers to the custom of placing coins under a foundation-stone, which I believe is of great antiquity.

Looking up the Atmeidan, and its plain of white powdery dust, you have on the left the low mosque wall, and on the other some dingy buildings painted Indian red, as Turkish houses frequently are built, and like huge cigar-boxes, of slips of lathing-plank, thin as the substance of a match-box. The furthest of the three columns is that crumbling pile, said to be once the record-pillar of the victorious drivers' names. It is now a dangerous, rickety heap of corroded stones,

pierced with holes, to which the nails of the bronze inscription-plates were once fastened. One looks and looks on it, and spins fancies; but to make the most of it, it is a mere nameless bit of vision, pointing no whither.

The nearest piece of antiquity is the obelisk, supported on its carved pedestal by four slabs of copper, green with verdigris, and sculptured with rows of hieroglyphics—hawk and beetle, water-bucket and guitar—clean cut and sharp as when first engraved. On the base are alto-reliefs of the coarse workmanship of the Lower Empire, representing some religious ceremonial. The bossy figures have a certain Roman air of strength about them, and interest us because we know that their obelisk was one of those numerous ones that adorned the spaces between the metæ or goals in the old Circus, which was 400 paces long and 100 broad. Luckily, the Turks, who generally deface all graven images as idolatrous, have spared these squab figures of emperor and attendants, that have been here stolidly looking on and bearing patiently Time's swathing blows ever since 330 A. D., when Constantine dedicated New Rome, and guards carrying white tapers moved in solemn procession through this very Hippodrome, bearing a gilt statue of Constantine in a triumphal car.

But it is the central pillar of the Atmeidan—the smallest of the three—which most attracts us, on account of its indisputable antiquity, which even the sceptical Gibbon confessed to be indubitable. It is the bronze serpent that once on triple heads (now destroyed) supported, in the temple of Delphi, the golden tripod that, after the defeat of Xerxes, was consecrated by the rejoicing Greeks. It was this very pillar that Mohammed II., when he rode into the conquered city, struck and defaced with his blood-stained battle-axe. He is said to have broken off the under-jaw of one of the serpent's heads; but he could not have severed so large a mass of bronze as now appears to be missing. There is a refinement about the work, mutilated as it is, that proclaims the wonderful Greek hand, so pliant and so creative; and I looked with wonder on the drift of time that had survived two great nations. It brought back to my mind Delphi, that I had lately visited, with its blue mountain-pass, and the strange cleft in the rock that you clamber up to, in the very bosom of precipices that would almost make a goat hesitate before he began the scramble. What it must have seen, could it speak, this tripod of bygone Apollo—what eddies of insurrection and sudden volcanoes of enraged fire, when the Blue drivers in the Circus triumphed over the Green, or when the Greens sprang, sword in hand, on their defeated rivals; what long trains of emperors, from bearded Julian and foppish Constantine, to the unhappy Greek, the last of the purple wearers; what scurriles of chariots; what burning wheels flashing amid the troubled dust! The Circus revolts, that so often set old Constantinople in flames, and deluged this very Hippodrome with hot blood, arose from quarrels that had originated in the charioteer-factions of Rome. Gibbon (who, by the by, makes a great many topographical mistakes about Stamboul) tells us they had been fed by Caligula, Nero, the Wolf Caracalla, the monster Elagabalus, Vitellius the bloated, and the wicked Commodus, who all used to visit the stable, pet the winning horses, protect the Blues, or chastise the Greens. Theodorich himself had been obliged to protect the Greens against a patrician consul, who upheld the Blues at all risks. For centuries, the Whites, Reds, Blues, and Greens swept round the Circus amid the shouts of a maddened people. The mystical and poetical choose to consider that these colours typified the four seasons, and that the blue and green represented the contest of earth and sea. Justinian supported the Blues, who were orthodox; while the Greens were Anastasians and Arians. These factions divided all the East between them, severed



families, and filled the streets of Constantinople with murder and bloodshed. On one occasion, the Greens, concealing stones and daggers under baskets of fruit, murdered 3000 of the Blues. On another, nearly all the city was burned, and 30,000 people fell by the sword of the Blues. We who see a torrent of coloured silks flash by us at a race, not caring particularly who wins, can scarcely imagine the fury of those dissolute factions, when for five years during Justinian's reign, the Blues, dressed as Huns with tight sleeves, flowing robes, and long hair, murdered whom they would, and at last broke out in the Nika seditions and the burning down of St Sophia; or when the Greens crowned the patrician Hypatius, and were at last only put down by Belisarius with 300 Illyrian troops, bursting open the gates of the Hippodrome, and slaughtering all he could meet.

It was on a great festival of the Ides of January, 532, that at the twenty-second race the Emperor Justinian (a Blue) grew impatient at the continued clamour of the Greens, who complained of being persecuted and oppressed by the ministers Tribonian, and John of Cappadocia, the prefect of Constantinople. Through a brazen-voiced crier, the emperor then stood up and carried on a most extraordinary dialogue with his factious people.

'Be patient and attentive, ye insolent railers!' shouted the crier; 'be mute, ye Jews, Samaritans, and Manicheans!'

'Long life and victory to the emperor—hear the emperor!' shouted the surging Greens.

'Be silent, rebels!' roared the stentor.

'We are poor and innocent,' said the Greens; 'we are injured—our children are murdered in the very streets. There is a remorseless persecution against all of our name and colour.'

'Wretches, be silent!' stormed the crier.

'Let us die, O Emperor!' returned the disorderly Greens; 'but let us die by your command, and in your service.'

'Ariana, be still!'

'We renounce a prince who disgraces the majesty of the purple.'

'Infidels, hold your tongues!'

'We renounce allegiance to a prince who refuses justice to his people.'

'Monsters, have respect for the Porphyrogenitus!'

'Curses on the day that the father of Justinian was born!'

'Rebels!'

'Homicide!'

'Revolters!'

'Perjured tyrant!'

'Haters of God!'

'Ass!'

'Do you despise your lives?' roared the emperor, getting rapidly black in the face.

The Blues leaped up with fury, and flashed out their swords. The Greens rose and fled, filling the streets with terror.

Far and wide flow fire and blood. The prefect's palace is burned; the prisons are forced open; the Heruli of Justinian attack the very priests and relics that come to stop the fray. The emperor flies with Theodora to his palace-fortress. He has all but resolved to fly the city with his family and treasures. The soldiers fire the houses. The very women pour missiles from the house-tops. St Sophia is red with flames. The baths of Xeuippus are destroyed. Churches and hospitals are razed to the ground. Eighteen illustrious patricians were thrown into the sea. But not till the Blues forsook the Greens and joined the emperor was the fire stanchied with the blood of 30,000 people.

It was in this enclosure that, among clouds of smoking dust, the picked horsemen of the janizaries—used in Mahmoud's time, the father of the present sultan—were wont to play here with the spear, or

rather with the *djereed*, or cane, that military weapon so popular among the undegenerated Turks of the last generation. Here, around the pillar of twisted bronze, green with rust, and round the winner's shattered column, and the granite obelisk, brought from distant Nile, wheeled and careered those proud horsemen, their turbans glistening with Asian gems; their mail-hauberks pliant as silk round their sinewy limbs; their battle-axes at their saddle-bows; the plumes waving on helmets of steel, inlaid with talismanic sentences from the Koran. Here their fiery Arab stallions snorted and pawed the ground, and lashed out and plunged as the hot air grew dark with crossing javelins. I never walk in the Atmeidan, cheapening scorched nuts, or baked chick-peas, at the street-stalls, without thinking of these tumultuous horsemen, and fancying I hear again their yells of 'Allah!' or 'Taleel!' as this horse stumbled or that spearman fell.

Once when I and Mr Dilly—who, with Mr Dally, are the chief English *attachés* at the Turkish embassy—were walking up and down the Hippodrome, so quiet and serious in the sunshine, talking of the great massacre of the janizaries that took place here early in Mahmoud's reign, when like the Mamelukes, these dreaded Praetorian guards, who had no longer power to dethrone sultans at their will, were lured from their adjacent barracks and mowed down with shattering whirlwinds of grape-shot; it was then, I say, when I was trying to picture them with their conical caps, from which the hideous bear-skin muff of our own grenadiers were borrowed by us in Charles II.'s time; their camp-kettles, which served them instead of standards; their cook, with his gigantic spoon; their drums and sabres, all crushed into one bloody heap of slaughter, that Dilly, biting off sharply the bud-like end of his thirteenth cigar, condescended to describe to me the wonderful *djereed* practice he had once witnessed at Cairo before Mohammed Ali.

It was at Ramadan time that a certain Lebanon sheik, one of the Esjedi's tribe, who number 80,000 horsemen, came one day to the Atmeidan, to exhibit his wonderful skill with the cane-javelin to Mohammed Ali, who knew that he had already killed two men, besides putting out several men's eyes, cracking innumerable skulls, being denounced by the mullahs, and put under a sort of excommunication. The sheik, however, had lately had his right arm broken by his horse, Potiphah, falling with him in a mountain-pass above Beyrout, and he was unwilling to use the *djereed* at all till he had in some degree recovered. Pressed, however, he at last consented, and threw two *djereeds*: the first fell on the tiles of the palace, at the other end of the Hippodrome; the second cleared the building, and passed over to the other side. This astonished every one, and roused the curiosity of Mohammed Ali to an extreme pitch, so that nothing would satisfy him but matching the sheik with a favourite black eunuch of his, who, it was said, had once driven the *djereed* clean through a man's body, and who no one hitherto had beaten.

The sheik reluctantly consented, and proceeded to pick out a *djereed* from a sheaf of weapons made of plane, olive, lance-wood, ash, and fir, blunt, and about four feet long. He selected a well-balanced one, poised it, tried its weight, and held it ready in his left hand, ready to deliver it with full strength, just as the horse was wheeling round, which gives the spear its dreadful impetus. The black burst into the Hippodrome a few minutes after, eager for the contest, for he was a man who could tire out three horses, and had been known to send a *djereed* clean through a wooden door. His horse moved as if it knew its master's will, and turned at a touch of the black rider's heel, or a bend of his body. The negro's red eyes glared death upon the poor sheik with the bandaged arm, who he despised as an unworthy adversary.

Instantly dashing at each other, the rivals hurled their djereeds full at each other's faces, each catching the weapon of the other twice in succession; but the second time the sheik, stooping and catching the black's djereed, which he had discovered to be a weapon of exquisite poise and power, threw it back with such truth and violence that it entered under the eunuch's right shoulder-blade, and struck him dead to the ground, much to the horror of the Mamelukes, but not the least disconcerting the sheik of Lebanon, who before beginning the contest, had obtained absolution from all consequences from the eunuch's royal master, Mohammed Ali.

I thanked Mr Dilly for his amusing and apropos story as we strolled home to the hotel down the knobby steep streets, having first, to bear up against the heat, purchased some peaches, which, split open to shew the dark wrinkled stone, are the street-fruit of Stamboul. I think with this, some sherbet, and a slice of water-melon, aided by three Hebrew guides, who fought and tore each other to pieces for the honour of conducting us, we got back to Pera with no great loss, but hot, tired, sore-footed, cheated, and anathematising the Turkish nation generally.

#### DISCONTENT-MONGERS.

I've not the least objection to you, gentle reader, sir or madam, saying what you please; but I think gentlemen and ladies would very often do very much good by holding their tongues. They inveigh bitterly against the discontent that everywhere prevails, but I've no hesitation in saying, that they contribute all in their power to that discontent. They won't allow a fellow to be easy, never mind what position he is in. They'll always find out some angular point which they will thrust, in quite a friendly way, into his diaphragm, and cause to spring thereout all kinds of evil desires. For instance, I was one day taking my luncheon in a very happy and contented frame of mind, though I had nothing but an egg, a roll, and a cup of chocolate, in a much-frequented confectioner's, when enter to me my dear friend A. (my name's B.), who shakes my faith in the good things before me after the following caustic fashion:

A. (Regarding my egg with a sneer). I should think that's an exceedingly stale egg, isn't it?

B. Oh! no; not at all: a very nice egg.

A. Hem! It don't look so. I shouldn't like to eat it. I should say it was at least a week old.

B. (Breaking his roll nervously). Well, I don't know. All I can say is, if it's a week old, it has kept uncommonly well.

A. Hillos! what's that in your roll?

B. (After a careful examination). Only a currant.

A. Oh, is that all? I thought it was an insect: it looks very much like an insect.

B. (Testily, and with decreased appetite). Well, it isn't, then. Have you any remarks to make on my chocolate?

A. No; I've no remarks to make; only, are you sure they don't put rhubarb into it?

And so I depart, ill at ease, and with melancholy thoughts, and can never take the same things for luncheon again without misgivings.—It's just the same thing with your lodgings: a man comes to see you, and as soon as he becomes sufficiently familiar, he's sure to find out something disagreeable in them. They are either gloomy, and would, he is quite certain, drive him to suicide; or they admit too much sun, and are so hot, that he wonders you don't melt; or they are in so noisy a neighbourhood, that he declares he couldn't do a stitch of work; or in so quiet a street, that he expects some day to hear that you've gone melancholy-mad. You may try to

laugh it off, and say that it's not your fault that you don't live in Park Lane, and have double windows to keep the noise out, and livery-servants to send the peripatetic minstrels away, and every luxury which modern civilisation can put at the service of the moneyed man; but that, unfortunately, you are obliged to lodge where you can, and that, until he mentioned it, you had never thought of the host of inconveniences to which he proves that you are exposed. He'll shake his head, and inform you compassionately that *he* at anyrate wouldn't lodge there; and as soon as he has gone, you find your old contentment deserting you, and you begin to fume and fret, and say to yourself that it certainly is a very unhealthy place, and a noisy withal, and that you really must get out of it as soon as you can. And so you plague yourself and your landlady, who is by no means anxious to get rid of you, all because a talkative friend couldn't either descant upon the advantages rather than the disadvantages of your hermitage, or at least confine himself to general topics. For my part, I'd much sooner a man talked even politics to me, than convinced me by the most cogent arguments that I paid more rent than I ought, considering my accommodation; that I should inevitably injure my heart by constantly mounting so many flights of steps; and that if the cholera should visit us in the autumn, I must consider myself very fortunate if it didn't find me out. It would be just as easy for him, and more pleasant for me, if he would only take the trouble to remark how central the position is, how convenient it is to have a baker over the way, a public-house at the corner, a grocer's next door one way, and a tobacconist's the other, and an undertaker's—especially if the cholera should set in—at No. 27. Or if he couldn't find it in his heart to say anything cheerful and agreeable, why not abuse foreign countries? I'm always ready for that. Europe, Asia, Africa, or America—it's all the same to me. Foreigners I consider fair game; and I can listen, though I don't believe a word, to story after story illustrative of the want of soap and water in France, Germany, and other continental nations, to tirades against the slothfulness of Asiatics, to strictures upon the ignobility of Africans, and to sneers at the domineering, dollar-getting, debt-repudiating, expectation-loving Americans, with a feeling akin to positive pleasure.

How things are managed at Buckingham Palace now-a-days, I can't say, as I have not been on visiting terms there for some years past; but as most fashions are popularly supposed to emanate from the court, it may be fairly assumed that the conversations of visitors in general society are based upon the practice which obtains at court. We may suppose, therefore, that her Most Gracious Majesty is obliged to submit patiently to the ordeal which is gone through by every materfamilias; that her royal visitors criticise, find fault with, and make suggestions about her apartments, just as plebeian visitors do about Mrs Smith's. They think the white drawing-room ought to be pink, and the green drawing-room white, and this ought to be there, and that ought to be here; just as Mrs Smith's visitors express their conviction that her villa would be perfection if she would only change every single arrangement in it, and leave Mrs Smith at their departure in an agony of vexation.

The discontent-mongers, moreover, don't confine their efforts to making you dissatisfied with your domestic surroundings; they tackle you upon the ground of your daily occupation. If you're in the army, they think it a great pity you didn't go into the navy, and then you would have been sure of speedy promotion; and if you're in the navy, you ought clearly, for your own interest, to have been in the army. To a clergyman, they bemoan the scarcity of benefices, and point out to him the dead certainty that he would have succeeded ten thousand times



better had he chosen the medical profession; whilst they know a man who would have given the M.D. a fat living on their recommendation, had he happened to have taken orders. In fact, with them, 'whatever is, is *wrong*.' We have all sat by such people at dinner, and listened to their Mephistophelian talk till our food disagreed with us, and our wine failed to exhilarate. They know as well as they know their alphabet all the stereotyped disagreeables of every profession and every business; and directly they find out to which any man belongs, they condole with him upon his disagreeables. Now, I maintain that nothing irritates a man so much as gratuitous condolence. There are some men of such compassionate natures, that they have no room left for delicacy. A cab once drove up to an upholsterer's of a compassionate turn of mind. Inside the cab was a lame gentleman, who had some difficulty in descending and walking to the shop. As soon as he arrived at the shop-door, the compassionate upholsterer descried him, rushed forward, assisted him into the shop, and exclaimed with all the rudeness of ignorant pity: 'I didn't see as you was a *cripple*, sir, or I'd have helped you out of the cab.' I rather think it was lucky for the upholsterer that the gentleman was 'a cripple.'

The discontent-monger behaves much in the same manner; he is only careful to speak of facts the mention of which, however unpalatable to you, cannot well be made a *casus belli*. You must grin and suffer. If he can only get hold of a poor naval or military officer, it is really a sight to see how he'll torture him. He'll soon get him upon the subject of promotion by merit, and point out to him, in the most benevolent way in the world, the little chance he has of succeeding in his profession. He has a whole list of instances at his fingers' and tongue's end of half-pay lieutenants in both services, and he never fails to enumerate them. He certainly hopes that his hearers may be more fortunate, but the tone of voice and the gestures with which he expresses his forlorn hopes, are enough to make you look for the names of those for whom he is so hopeful in next morning's list of 'Found Drowned.' If a man should be rather prosperous than otherwise in his profession, the discontent-monger will not be at all disconcerted: he can ask the young military captain of twenty-one years of age how he likes going to market for his company, and turning 'meat-examiner,' like the beadle at Newgate Market; and how he relishes spending a fine afternoon in marching awkward country boobies round a dull square—if you can go round a square; he can demand of the commander in the navy at twenty-three when he expects to be posted; and he can repeat the names of a whole string of men who became commanders at a very early age, and died commanders full of years. It is a singular fact, he will observe, that a naval man always begins to stick at commander. He has at his command fragments of speeches delivered in the House of Commons by Lord Clarence Paget and Sir J. Pakington, which bear out his views exactly, and he takes care to pour them fluently into the ears of his hearers until he perceives that he has inoculated them with the seeds of discontent. I was once witness to the effect produced by this kind of influence upon a young *littérateur*. The wielder of the influence was such a nice, kind, benevolent man, that I am sure he had no idea he was a discontent-monger. He was a clergyman, a subscriber to several charities, and a governor of innumerable institutions; the blind, the halt, and the maimed, the deaf, the dumb, and the idiotic were alike objects of his compassion and his generosity, yet he had not the sense to conceive that by his well-meant but rude remarks he was spoiling the digestion of the aspirant who was his *vis-à-vis* at dinner. This was the purport of their conversation.

Cl. Our host tells me you wrote that article in *Once a Day* upon the Revision of the Bible.

Lit. I did.

Cl. I was very much pleased with what you said, sir, and your arguments appeared to me forcible and logical.

Lit. I'm very glad you liked it: I wish there were more of your opinion.

Cl. You are at the Bar, I presume?

Lit. No, I'm not.

Cl. A student then?

Lit. No.

Cl. You belong to no profession?

Lit. No, I do not; unless you call literature a profession.

Cl. Well, scarcely. I think it a pity you don't enter at one of the Inns of Court.

Lit. Pray, what should I gain by that? I should never practise, even if I could, which is not likely.

Cl. No; but still it would be a sort of voucher—

Lit. Voucher? I hope you don't consider that I need any voucher.

Cl. Oh! dear no, not at all; but it is as well always to—a—a—have a profession. Don't you think so?

Lit. (Surlily). No, I don't. I think a man can't be more than a gentleman; and if he isn't one otherwise, neither 'getting called' nor 'taking orders' will make him one.

And so the reverend discontent-monger held his peace; and *littérateur* pondered and didn't enjoy his dinner or his dessert, and went home early, and couldn't sleep, and got up the next morning less contented with his lot, and more suspicious of his fellow-creatures than he had been hitherto. He couldn't, for the life of him, imagine what pleasure could possibly accrue to anybody from the making of uncalled-for remarks, and why men and women couldn't have sufficient confidence in their host and hostess to meet other men and women in a social and convivial manner without wanting to know 'what they are;' and whether there is much satisfaction in having half-a-crown a year more than your neighbour, and in belonging to a profession. For his own part, he thinks he'd rather not; he has no desire to kill anybody, or to be sea-sick, or to browbeat witnesses, or to cut and cauterise his fellow-creatures, or to fill their insides with nauseous drugs, or to send them out of the world before their time, or to bury them; *chacun à son goût*: he'll belong to no profession; still that plaguy discontent-monger has rather upset his equanimity.

But the most inveterate discontent-mongers, I am sorry to say, are women; I mean, when they are discontent-mongers at all. What the humble-minded, married curate has to endure until he gets a rectory, I have heard, but daren't repeat; and what the easily satisfied rector has to put up with until he obtains a deanery, I can realise by a strong effort of imagination; but what the perfectly contented dean has to go through until he arrives at a bishopric or a place in a cemetery, I neither can nor wish to imagine: I'm not a Dante, and I hate horrors. Who hasn't seen the female discontent-mongers fitting from house to house like spirits of discord, and narrating with frightful exaggerations to their heretofore unambitious friends in the East suburbs everything that takes place in the West suburbs: how that Miss Snip was married last Thursday, and had such a lot of crinoline on, she was obliged to be let down through the roof, as she couldn't be got through the door; that there were more than a hundred people in the church (by invitation), and that it required six policemen to keep them in order, just as they do at St George's in the East; that 120 people sat down (or stood up, according to the star they were born under) at breakfast; that the bride had on so magnificent and costly a bracelet that her brother, who gave it her, was obliged to sell money out of the funds to pay for it; and that the aggregate of presents upon the

occasion filled one of Chaplin and Home's three-horse vans—until a general howl of discontent is raised amongst the inhabitants of the 'Happy Valley' in the East, and their souls are filled with envy?

And who hasn't suffered from Mrs Jones, who is in a chronic state of feverish anxiety lest you shouldn't have heard the last scandalous report about the school to which you have sent your children? You were perfectly contented, and your children were perfectly contented, until she came with the story of the boy who had been roasted some years before by his school-fellows; and then you begin to feel uneasy, forgetting that even had such a thing happened, it is on that very account less likely to happen again: you remove your youngsters from the place where they were so happy, and were getting on so well, and send them to the Rev. M. A.'s, where they are not allowed to go on the water, because a boy was drowned fifty years ago, but where they have salt fish on Ash-Wednesday, pancakes on Shrove-Tuesday, and clean pocket-handkerchiefs *ad libitum*. And they become such nice boys, always bowing and scraping, and dancing, and never playing—and all through Mrs Jones. And you can't help remarking with Cratinus, in respect of Mrs Jones, and Mrs Fidgets, and Mrs Ricketts, and all the tribe—*κακὸς ἰσχυρὸς ἀνὴρ* is Zúis—or, as the Irish bard more tersely remarks, 'May the devil fly away with them!'

### THE WILD HUNTRESS.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—THE HOROLOGE OF THE DEAD HORSE.

WITH inquiring eye and anxious heart, I turned towards the spot where I had left my companion.

To my joy, he was still upon his feet, and coming towards me. I could see blood dripping from his fingers, and a crimson-stained rent in the sleeve of his buckskin shirt; but the careless air with which he was regarding it, at once set my mind at rest. He was smiling: there could not be much danger in the wound?

It proved so in effect. The bullet had passed through the muscular part of the left forearm—only wounding the flesh. It did not even require a surgeon. The hemorrhage once checked, the dressing which my experience enabled me to give it was sufficient; and kept slung a few days, it would be certain to heal.

Unpleasant as was the incident, it seemed to affect my companion far less than the words that preceded it. The allegorical allusions were but too well understood; and though they added but little to the knowledge already in our possession, that little produced a fresh acerbity of spirit.

It affected me equally with my comrade—perhaps more. The figurative revelations of the Indian had put a still darker phase on the affair. The letter of Lillian spoke only of a far country, where gold was dug out of the sand—California, of course. There was no allusion to the Salt Lake—not one word about a migration to the metropolis of the Mormons. Su-wanee's speech, on the other hand, clearly alluded to this as the goal of the squatter's journey!

How her information could have been obtained, or whence derived, was a mystery; and, though loath to regard it as oracular, I could not divest myself of a certain degree of conviction that her words were true. The mind, ever prone to give assent to information conveyed by hints and innuendos, too often magnifies this gipsy knowledge; and dwells not upon the means by which it may have been acquired. For this reason gave I weight to the warnings of the brown-skinned sibyl—though uttered only to taunt, and too late to be of service.

The incident altered our design—only so far as to urge us to its more rapid execution; and, without losing time, we turned our attention once more to the pursuit of the fugitives.

The first point to be ascertained was the time of their departure.

'If it wan't for the rain,' said the hunter, 'I ked a told it by thar tracks. They must a made some hyar in the mud, while carryin' thar things to the dug-out. The durned rain's washed 'em out—every footmark o' 'em.'

'But the horses? what of them? They could not have gone off in the canoe?'

'I war just thinkin' o' them. The one you seed with Stebbins must a been hired, I reck'n; an' from Kipp's stables. Belike enuf, the skunk tuk him back the same night, and then come agin 'ithout him; or Kipp might a sent a nigger to fetch him?'

'But Holt's own horse—the old "critter," as you call him?'

'That *diz* need explainin'. He must a left him ahind. He culdn't a tuk *him* in the dug-out; besides, he wan't worth takin' along. The old thing war clean wore out, an' wuldn't a sold for his weight in corn-shucks. Now, what ked they a done wi' him?'

The speaker cast a glance around, as if seeking for an answer.

'Heigh!' he exclaimed, pointing to some object, on which he had fixed his glance. 'Yonder we'll find *him*! See the buzzarts! The old hoss's past prayin' for, I'll be bound.'

It was as the hunter had conjectured. A little outside the enclosure, several vultures were upon the trees, perched upon the lowest branches, and evidently collected there by some object on the ground.

On approaching the spot, the birds flew off with reluctance; and the old horse was seen lying among the weeds, under the shadow of a gigantic sycamore. He was quite dead, though still wearing his skin; and a broad red disc in the dust, opposite a gaping wound in the animal's throat, shewed that he had been slaughtered where he lay!

'He's killed the critter!' musingly remarked my companion as he pointed to the gash; 'jest like what he'd do! He might a left the old thing to some o' his neighbors, for all he war worth; but it wudn't a been Hick Holt to a did it. He wan't partickler friendly wi' any o' us, an' least o' all wi' myself—tho' I niver knew the adzact reezun o't, 'ceptin' that I beat him once shootin' at a barbecue. He war mighty proud o' his shootin', an' that riled him, I reck'n: he's been ugly wi' me iver since.'

I scarcely heeded what the young hunter was saying—my attention being occupied with a process of analytical reasoning. In the dead horse, I had found a key to the time of departure.

The ground for some distance around where the carcass lay was quite dry: the rain having been screened off by a large spreading branch of the sycamore, that extended its leafy protection over the spot. Thus sheltered, the body lay just as it had fallen; and the crimson rivulet, with its terminating 'pool,' had only been slightly disturbed by the feet of the buzzards—the marks of whose claws were traceable in the red mud, as was that of their beaks upon the eyeballs of the animal.

All these were signs, which the experience of a prairie campaign had taught me how to interpret; and which the forest lore of my backwoods comrade also enabled him to read: since at the first question put to him, he comprehended my meaning.

'How long think you since he was killed?' I asked, pointing to the dead horse.

'Ha! ye're right, stranger!' said he, perceiving the object of the interrogatory. 'I war slack not to think o' that. We kin easy fine out, I reck'n.'

The hunter bent down over the carcass, so as to bring his eyes close to the red gash in the neck. In this he placed the tips of his fingers, and kept them there. He uttered not a word, but held his head slantwise and steadfast, as if listening. Only for a few seconds did he remain in this attitude; and then,

as if suddenly satisfied with the examination, he rose from his stooping posture, exclaiming as he stood erect:

'Good, by thunder! The old horse hain't been dead 'bove a kuppel o' hours. Look thar, stranger! the blood ain't froze? I kin a'most fancy thar's heat in his old karkies yet!'

'You are sure he has been killed this morning?'

'Quite sure o't; an' at most three, or maybe four hour agone. See thar!' he continued, raising one of the limbs, and letting it drop again; 'limber as a eel's tail. Ef he'd a been dead last night, he'd been stiff afore this.'

'Quite true,' replied I, convinced, as was my companion, that the horse had been slaughtered that morning.

This bit of knowledge was an important contribution towards fixing the time of the departure. It told the *day*; the hour was of less importance to our plans; though to that, by a further process of reasoning, we were enabled to make a very near approximation.

Holt must have killed the horse before going off; and the act both of us believed could not have been accomplished at a very early hour. As far as the sign enabled us to tell, not more than four hours ago; and perhaps about two before the time of my first arrival in the clearing.

Whether the squatter had left the ground immediately after the performance of this rude sacrifice, it was impossible to tell. There was no sign by which to determine that; but the probability was, that the deed was done just upon the eve of departure; and the slaughter of the old horse was the closing act of Holt's career, in his clearing upon Mud Creek.

Only one doubt remained. Was it he who had killed the animal? I had conceived a suspicion pointing to Su-wa-nee—but without being able to attribute to the Indian any motive for the act.

'No, no!' replied my comrade, in answer to my interrogatory on this head: 'twas Holt hisself, sartin. He culdn't take the old hoss along wi' him, an' he didn't want anybody else to git him. Besides, the gurl hedn't no reezun to a dit it. She'd a been more likely to a tuk the old critter to thar camp—seem' he war left behind w' nobody to own him. Tho' he wan't worth more'n what the skin 'ud fetch, he'd a done them ar Indyns well enuf, for carryin' thar traps an' things. No, 'twan't her, nor anybody else 'ceptin' Holt hisself—he did it.'

'If that be so, comrade, there is still hope for us. They cannot have more than four hours the start. You say the creek has a winding course.'

'Crooked as a coon's hind leg.'

'And the Obion?'

'Most part the same. It curls through the bottom like the tail o' a cur-dog; an' nigher the Mississippi, it don't move faster than a snail 'ud crawl. I reck'n the run o' the river 'll not help 'em much. They 'll hev a good spell o' paddlin' afore they git down to Mississippi; an' I hope that durned Mormon 'll blister his ugly claws at it!'

'With all my heart!' I rejoined; and both at the same instant recognising the necessity of taking time by the forelock, we hurried back to our horses, sprang into the saddle, and started along the trace conducting to the mouth of the Obion.

#### CHAPTER XXXVII.

##### A LOOK-OUT FROM ALOFT.

It cost us a fatiguing ride of nearly twelve hours' duration—most of it along by-roads and bridle-paths—at intervals passing through tracts of swampy soil, where our horses sank to the saddle-girths in mud.

We rode continuously: stopping only once to recruit our horses at one of the 'stands,' or isolated log hostleries—which are found upon the old 'traces'

connecting the sparse settlements of the backwoods. It was the only one we saw upon our route; and at it we remained no longer than was absolutely necessary to rest our wearied steeds, and put them in a condition for the completion of the journey.

We knew the necessity of haste. Our only hope lay in being able to reach the mouth of the Obion before the canoe could pass out of it. Otherwise, our journey would be in vain; and we should not only have our long ride for nothing, but would be under the necessity of doubling the distance by riding back again.

Along the route we found time to discuss the circumstances—both those in our favour and against us. The water-way taken by the canoe was far from being direct. Both the creek and the larger stream curved repeatedly in their courses; and in ordinary times, were of sluggish current. The freshet, however, produced by the late rain-storm, had rendered it swifter than common; and we knew that the canoe would be carried down with considerable rapidity—faster than we were travelling on horseback.

On such roads, and for so great a distance, fast travelling was impossible; and could only have been accomplished at the risk of killing our horses. Mounted as I was, I might have made more of the time; but I was under the necessity of slackening pace for my companion—whose sorry steed constantly required waiting for.

Our sole chance lay in our route being shorter, and in the circumstance that the fugitives had not a very long start of us; but for all this, the issue was exceedingly doubtful; and, by the nicest calculations, we were satisfied we should have but little margin to spare.

I need hardly point out the importance of our arriving in time. Should the canoe get beyond the mouth of the Obion—without our seeing it—we should be left undetermined as to whether they had gone up the Mississippi or down; and therefore altogether without a guide as to our future movements. In fact, we should be unable to proceed further in the pursuit.

So far as the mouth of the Obion, their route was fixed; and of course ours was also determined. But beyond, it would be on our part mere blind guessing; and, should evil chance conduct us in the wrong direction, the result would be ruin to our hopes.

On the other hand, could we but arrive in time—if only to see the canoe entering the great river—and note which turning it took—our purpose would be accomplished. That is, our *present* purpose; for beyond that of ascertaining their route of travel across the plains, and their point of destination, I had formed no plans. To follow them wherever they might go—even to the distant shores of the Pacific—to seek them wherever they might settle—to settle beside them—beside *her*—these were the ideas I had as yet but vaguely conceived. All ulterior designs were contingent on the carrying out these, and still shrouded under the cloudy drapery of the ambiguous future.

The purposes of my travelling-companion differed slightly from mine, and were, perhaps, a little more definite. His leading idea was a settlement of old scores with Stebbins, for wrongs done to him—which he now more particularly detailed to me. They were sufficiently provocative of revenge; and, from the manner of my comrade, and the vows he occasionally uttered, I could perceive that he would be as eager in the pursuit as myself. In all probability, an encounter with the migrating party would bring about an important change in their programme: since the young hunter was determined, as he expressed himself, 'to force the durned skunk into a fight.'

Inspired by such motives, we pressed on to the end of our journey; and reached the mouth of the Obion, after a long and wearisome ride.

It was midnight when we arrived upon the shore of the Mississippi, at its point of confluence with the



Tennessean stream. The land upon which we stood was scarcely elevated above the surface of the water; and covered, every foot of it, with a forest of the cotton-wood poplar, and other water-loving trees. These extending along the marshy borders of both streams, hindered us from having a view of their channels. To obtain this, it was necessary to climb one of the trees; and my comrade being disabled, the task devolved upon me.

Dismounting, I chose one that appeared easiest of ascent; and, clambering up it as high as I could go, I fixed myself in a fork, and commenced duty as a vidette.

My position could not have been better chosen. It afforded me a full view, not only of the Obion's mouth, but also of the broad channel into which it emptied—at their confluence, forming an expanse of water that, but for its rolling current, might have been likened to a vast lake.

There was moonlight over the whole surface; and the erratic ripples were reflected in sparkling coruscations, scarcely to be distinguished from the gleaming of the 'lightning bugs'—that hovered in myriads along the edges of the marsh.

Both banks of the lesser stream were draped to the water's edge with an unbroken forest of cotton-woods—the tops of which, exhibiting their characteristic softness of outline, were unstirred by the slightest breeze. Between rolled the brown waters of the Obion, in ruder, grander flow, and with channel extended by the freshest. Every inch of it, from side to side, was under my observation—so completely, that I could distinguish the smallest object that might have appeared upon its surface. Not even the tiniest waif could have escaped me—much less a canoe freighted with men; and containing that fairer form, that would be certain to secure the keenest and most eager glances of my eye.

I congratulated myself on reaching this perch. I perceived that a better post of observation could not have been chosen. It was complete for the purpose; and, if I could only have felt sure that we had arrived in time, all would have been satisfactory.

Time alone could determine this; and turning my eyes up stream, I entered upon my earnest vigil.

#### CHAPTER XXXVIII.

##### THE WHITE FOG.

Vain vigil it proved. I shall not tire the reader with details. Suffice it to say, that we kept watch till morning's dawn; and then, profiting by the daylight, sought out a more convenient post of observation, where we continued our surveillance—watching and sleeping in turn.

Throughout the following day, and into the second, was our vigil extended: until, no longer able to hope against hope, we agreed finally to abandon it.

But for one circumstance, we might have felt surprise at the result. We were both convinced that we had reached the river's mouth in good time: since, by our calculations, the canoe could not possibly have 'headed' us. But for the same circumstance, we might have believed, that they had not yet come down the Obion; and perhaps would have remained at our post a day longer.

The explanation is this: On the first night of our watch, a few hours after having taken my station in the tree, a fog had suddenly arisen upon the rivers, shrouding the channels of both. It was the 'white fog'—a well-known phenomenon of the Mississippi—that often extends its dangerous drapery over the bosom of the 'Father of Waters': a thing of dread—even to the skilled pilots who navigate this mighty stream.

On that particular night, the fog lay low upon the water: so that in my position near the top of the tree I was entirely clear of its vapoury disc; and could look down upon its soft filmy cumuli floating gently

over the surface—white and luminous under the silvery moonlight. The moon was still shining brightly; and both sky and forest could be seen as clearly as ever. The water-surface alone was hidden from my sight—the very thing I was most anxious to observe.

As if by some evasive demon of the flood, this curtain seemed to have been drawn: for, just as the fog had fairly unfurled itself, I fancied I could hear the dipping of a paddle at no great distance off in the channel of the stream. Moreover, gazing intently into the mist—as yet thin and filmy—I fancied I saw a long dark object upon the surface, with the silhouettes of human forms seated upon it—just as of a canoe *en profile* with passengers in it. I even noted the number of the upright forms: three of them, which exactly corresponded to that of the party we were expecting.

So certain was I, at the moment, of seeing all this, that I need not have shouted to assure myself. Excited with over-eagerness, I did so, and hailed the canoe in hopes of obtaining an answer.

My summons produced not the desired effect. On the contrary, it seemed to still the slight plashing I had heard; and, before the echoes of my voice died upon the air, the dark objects had glided out of sight—passing under thick masses of the floating vapour.

Over and over, I repeated my summons—each time changing the form of speech, and each time with like fruitless effect!

The only answer I received was from the blue heron, that, startled by my shouts, rose screaming out of the fog, and flapped her broad wings close to my perch upon the tree.

Whether the forms I had seen were real—or only apparitions conjured up by my excited brain—they vouchsafed no reply; and, in truth, in the very next moment, I inclined to the belief that my senses had been deceiving me!

From that time, my comrade and I were uncertain; and this uncertainty will explain the absence of our surprise at not seeing the canoe, and why we waited no longer for its coming.

The most probable conjecture was, that it had passed us in the fog; that the apparition was real; and that they who occupied the canoe were now far away on the Mississippi—no longer trusting to such a frail craft, but passengers on one of the numerous steam-boats, that by night as by day, and in opposite directions, we had seen passing the mouth of the Obion.

In all probability, then, the fugitives were now beyond the limits of Tennessee; and we felt sufficiently assured of this; but the more important point remained undetermined—whether they had gone northward or southward—whether by the routes of the Missouri or those of the Arkansas? Upon this question we were undecided as ever.

At that season of the year, the probabilities were in favour of the southern route; but it depended on whether the emigrants intended to proceed at once across the plains, or wait for the return of spring. I knew, moreover, that the Mormons had their own 'trains,' and ways of travelling; and that several new routes or 'trails' had been discovered during the preceding year, by military explorers, emigrants for Oregon and California, and by the Mormons themselves. But this knowledge only complicated the question, leaving us in hopeless doubt and indecision.

Thus unresolved, it would have been absurd to proceed further. Our only hope lay in returning to Swampville.

And whence this hope? What was to be expected in Swampville? Who was there in that village of golden dreams to guide me upon the track of my lost love?

No one—no human being. The index of my expectations was not a living thing, but a *letter*!

Assuredly, I had not forgotten that promise, so simply yet sweetly expressed: 'If I thought you would like to know where we are gone, I would write to you;' and again: 'If you will allow me, I will send a letter to Swampville, from the first place we come to, to tell you where we are going.'

Oh! that I could have told her how much I 'would like to know,' and how freely she had my permission to write! Alas! that was impossible, but the contingencies troubled me not much; I was full of hope that she would waive them.

Communicating this hope to my companion, we rode back to Swampville: with the design of laying siege to the post-office, until it should surrender up to us the promised epistle.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

## THE PROMISED EPISTLE.

Under any circumstances, a return to Swampville would have been necessary: certain pecuniary requirements called me back to that interesting village.

A journey, even across the desert, cannot be made without money; and the hundred dollars I had paid to Holt, with hotel and other incidental outlays, had left me with a very light purse. It would have taken three times as much as I was master of, to provide us with the scantiest equipment required for a prairie journey; and toward this the young hunter, willing to give his all, was able to contribute nothing. He would cheerfully have parted with his patrimony—as I with my purchase—for a very slender consideration; but, at that crisis, the Californian speculation demanded all the specie in circulation; and neither his clearing nor mine would have sold for a single dollar, had the payment been required in cash. A credit sale could not serve us in any way; and we were forced to hold on to our depreciated property—upon which not a single cent could be borrowed.

Never stood I in more need of my Nashville friend; and my appeal, already made, was promptly responded to—as I expected it would be. On the third day after my dispatch, the answer arrived—with a handsome enclosure: enough to carry us across the continent, and back again if need be.

We were now ready for the road. We waited only for that letter, that was to be the index to our destination.

How we passed our time during that interval of expectation is not worth describing. We enjoyed the hospitality of the Jackson hotel; and continued to escape the *espèglerie* of its husband-hunting denizens, by hunting the deer of the surrounding forest.

During the whole time, we went not near our respective 'plantations' on Mud Creek. Wingrove had good reason for being shy of that quarter; and I had no inclination to trust myself to its souvenirs. Moreover, the hours of the mail-rider were neither fixed nor regular; and on this account I avoided a prolonged absence from the post-office.

Six days of this expectancy I endured—six days of alternate hope and doubt—the latter at times so distressing, that even in the excitement of the chase I could not procure distraction for my thoughts! More than once, my comrade and I had almost ceased to hope; and half-resolved to launch ourselves on the great prairie ocean—trusting to chance to guide us to the haven of our hopes.

On the sixth day we had determined upon it; and only awaited the mail, that should arrive on the morning of the seventh.

The seventh proved the day of joy. Our doubts were dispelled. The cloud that hung over our course was cleared away, by the arrival of the expected epistle!

My fingers trembled, as I took the precious billet from the hands of the postmaster. He must have observed my emotion—though I did not open it in his

presence. The superscription was enough, to tell me from whom the letter came. I had studied the fac-simile of that pretty cipher, till it was well impressed upon my memory; and could therefore recognise it at a glance.

I did not even break open the envelope till we were upon the road. The postmark, 'Van Buren, Arkansas,' sufficiently indicated the direction we were to take; and not, till we had cleared the skirts of Swampville, and were *en route* for Memphis, did I enter on the pleasure of perusal.

The address was simply as before: 'TO EDWARD WARFIELD;' and so, too, the apostrophic commencement: 'STRANGER!'

I could have wished for some less distant word—some familiar phrase of endearment; but I was contented—for I knew that Lilian's too recent love had lacked the opportunity of learning its language. Before it had time to achieve the employment of those sweet forms of speech, its course had been rudely interrupted.

Thus ran the letter:

'STRANGER!—I hope you got my other letter, and that you were able to read it, for I had no paper, nor pens, nor ink to write it better—only a little bit of a pencil, that was my mother's, and the leaf which father said you tore out of a book. But I think I could have wrote it better, only I was so afraid that they would see me, and scold me for it, and I wrote it in a great hurry, when they were from home, and then left it on the table after both of them had gone down to the creek to get into the canoe. I thought no one would come to the house before you, and I hoped all the morning you might come before we were gone. I would have given a great deal to have been able to see you again; and I think father would have waited till you came, only his friend would not let him stay longer, but hurried us away. But I hope you got the letter, and that you will not be offended at me for writing this one I send you, without your leave. I promised that if you would allow me, I would write from some place, and tell you the name of the country where we are going; but I forgot that it would be impossible for you to give me leave, as you could not see me, nor yet know where to write it to me. I know now what country it is, for everybody we have seen is talking about it, and saying that it is full of gold, that lies on the ground in pieces as big as hickory-nuts; and I hear the name a many a time, over and over again. Father calls it "Californy," and some "California," and this, I suppose, is the right way of spelling it. It is near a great sea, or ocean as they call it, which is not the same that comes in at Philadelphia and New York, but far greater and bigger than the Mississippi and the Obion, and all the rivers put together. It must be a very large sea to be bigger than the Mississippi! But I am sure you must know all about it, for I have heard them say you had travelled in these far-away countries, and that you were an officer in the army, and had been fighting there with the Mexicans. I am glad you were not killed, and got safe home again to Tennessee; for if you had been killed, I should never have seen you; but now it is just as bad, if I am never to see you again. O sir! I would write to you again from that country, when we are settled there; but I fear you will forget me before then, and will not care to hear anything more about us.

'I shall never forget our dear Tennessee. I am very sorry at leaving it, and I am sure I can never be happy in California with all its gold—for what good can gold be to me? I should so like to hear sometimes from our old home, but father had no friends who could write to us; the only one we knew is gone away like ourselves.

'May be, sir, you would not mind writing to us—only a very short letter, to tell us how you get on with the clearing, and whether you have made it much bigger, and built a great house upon it, which I have heard father say you intended to do. I shall always like to

hear that you are in good health, and that you are happy.

'I have to tell you of a very strange thing that happened to us. At the mouth of the Obion river, when we were in the canoe at night-time—for we travelled all that night—we heard some one shouting to us, and O sir! it was so like your voice that I trembled when I heard it, for it appeared as if it came down out of the clouds. It was a thick mist, and we could see no one; but for all that, I would have cried out, but father would not let me speak. It appeared to be right above our heads; and father said it was some wood-cutters, who had climbed into a tree. I suppose that must have been it; but it was as like your voice as if it had been you that shouted, and as I knew you could not be there, it made me wonder all the more.

'We arrived at this place yesterday. It is a large town on the Arkansas river; and we came to it in a steam-boat. From here we are to travel in a wagon with a great many other people in what they call a "caravan," and they say we shall be many months in getting to the end of the journey. It is a long time to wait before I could write again, for there are no towns beyond Van Buren, and no post to carry the letters. But though I cannot write to you, I will not forget to think of the words you said to me, as I am now thinking of them every minute. In one of my mother's books which I brought with me, I have read a pretty piece. It is in poetry; and it is so like what I have been thinking of you, that I have learned it off by heart. It is so true-like and so pretty a piece that I thought you might like to read it, and hoping it may please you, I write it at the end of my letter, which I fear I have already made too long; but I hope you will have patience to read it all, and then read this poetry.

'I think of thee when Morning springs  
From sleep with plumage bathed in dew;  
And like a young bird lifts her wings  
Of gladness on the welkin blue.  
And when at noon the breath of love  
O'er flower and stream is wandering free,  
And sent in music from the grove—  
I think of thee—I think of thee!

'I think of thee, when soft and wide  
The Evening spreads her robe of light,  
And like a young and timid bride,  
Sits blushing in the arms of Night.  
And when the moon's sweet crescent springs  
In light o'er heaven's deep, waveless sea,  
And stars are forth like blessed things—  
I think of thee—I think of thee!

'O sir! it is very, very true! I do think of you, and I am sure I shall do so as long as I live.

LILIAN HOLT.'

'Ah, Lilian! I too of thee, and thy sweet song! Simple, but suggestive words! Knew I but where to address thee, you should soon know how responsive to them are the echoes of my heart!'

#### ALL ROUND THE WREKIN.

THE departure of Mr Walter White upon the 1st of every July from London, for the purpose of making a month's ramble in the country, and subsequently writing a book about it, may now be predicted as certainly as any movement of the Heavenly Bodies. He comes forth, knapsack in hand, out of his chamber on that morning, and rejoices, like a giant, to begin his tour. Having already 'devoured the earth,' as few pedestrians can, in Cornwall, the Tyrol, Saxony, Yorkshire, and Northumberland, he devotes his present volume\* to the Black Country—the regions about Birmingham and Wolverhampton. 'The name is

\* *All Round the Wrekin*. By Walter White. Chapman and Hall.

eminently descriptive, for blackness everywhere prevails; the ground is black, the atmosphere is black, and the underground is honey-combed by mining galleries stretching in utter blackness for many a league. The scene is marvellous, and to one who beholds it for the first time by night, terrific. Then the roaring furnaces are seen for miles around pouring forth their fierce throbbing flames like volcanoes; then the hundred chimneys of iron-works display their blazing crests, or sheafs of fiery tongues; then the dull gleam of heaps of roasting ironstone makes you fancy that the old globe itself is here smouldering away; overhead, dense clouds of smoke reflect a lurid light, rolling fitfully before the wind; while the hissing and rushing of steam, the clang and clatter of machinery, the roaring blasts, and the shock of ponderous hammer-strokes, all intensified by the presence of night, complete an effect which amazes alike the eye and the ear. The effect is one that vividly excites the imagination, and is not easily forgotten.

'By day, as the train speeds across, you hear the same noises, and see the fires divested of their nightly terrors, yet find it difficult to believe that a scene of so much havoc and seeming confusion represents prosperous industry, and one of the most important departments of British trade. Perhaps for the first time you become aware of the omnipotence of coal and iron; even the stations, walls, and bridges are built of bricks that have the appearance of iron. You catch glimpses of smoking heaps, of muddy canals, complications of locks, bridges, tramways; boats moving, trains rolling; of coal-pits where the iron arm projects from the little engine-house working busily up and down, while the whimsies creak as the long rope passes over; of abandoned workings where office and engine-house are in ruin, and scraps of ragged hedgerow look very miserable, and the tall posts stand up skeleton-like, and fragments of machinery lie about devoured by rust; of heaps, nay, hills, that resemble brick rubbish, of gigantic oyster-shells which a lady's hoop would hardly encircle, and big slaty-looking slabs—accumulations of refuse which cumber the ground. And amid all this are the cottages of artisans and miners; English homes, whence sun and stars are seen darkly, situate in a region devoid of repose and beauty, which looks as if smitten by desolation, notwithstanding that here and there grow patches of wheat and plots of potatoes.'

In the Black Country, and only there, we should hope, are beheld houses hooped with iron, to keep them from tumbling to pieces, and scarce a wall or chimney that is not more or less out of the perpendicular, through the sinking of the foundations, in consequence of the earth being so widely undermined. Luckily, just outside this dismal district lie some of the pleasantest and most pastoral scenes, and thither Mr White makes his excursions for relief, much as a whale comes up from the stifling deep to breathe and bask in the air and sunshine, and then plunges down again with a whisk of his tail into the profound. The landscape (of this surrounding country) 'is made up of broad rolling fields, and a glimpse of blue uplands in the distance between the trees, feasts the eye with verdure and good cultivation; and though not at all romantic, holds a charm in its pretty lanes, and inviting footpaths, and soothing quietness.'

A simple but pretty legend, suitable to the locality to which it belongs, was narrated to our author by a fellow-traveller whose trade like his own was inseparably connected with pedestrianism, concerning the rivers Severn, Wye, and Rheidiol. 'While crossing the flanks of Plinlimmon, I fell in with a Welsh pedler, who told me the legend of the three rivers, whose birthplace is the famous hill; how that on the eve of their bubbling up, they talked together, each emulous of rising earliest for his start on the morrow. Severn, waking at the first peep of dawn,



ran quickly down the hill, and chose a course through all the most beautiful towns and cities; Wye woke next, and finding himself anticipated, sped with many a curve and sudden bend into the best and richest land; and little Rheidiol waking last, saw that he had lost his chance, and exclaiming: "Never mind, I'll be first at the sea," tripped nimbly away to the western main at Aberystwith. "Told in Welsh," said the pedlar as he finished, "it was a much prettier story than in English." At Bewdley, Mr White picked up another local legend, less poetical, but not less true, concerning that well-conducted town and the Prince of Darkness. There is an isolated mound of sandstone, called the Devil's Spade-full, in the neighbourhood, which had its origin in the following circumstances: 'The Evil One being wroth against Bewdley because of the extraordinary godliness of the inhabitants, set out one day, with a little hill on his spade, to dam up the river and drown the town. He met a shoemaker carrying a bag on his shoulder, and beginning to feel weary, he inquired the distance to Bewdley. Crispin, emptying his bag of old shoes on the road, replied: "I have worn them all out a-coming from there." "Have you?" rejoins the other; "then I shan't carry this any further," and he threw down his load and vanished, and the Spade-full remains to this day.' At Congleton, where cock-fighting still upon the aly exists, bear-baiting was wont to be held in peculiar favour. If you wish, in a mixed company in those parts, to discover which of them are Congletonians, put the question, 'Who sold their Bible to buy a Bear?' and you will very speedily be answered; 'for, as tradition tells, the clerk of that ancient town was also bear-warden, and he on one occasion, when the exchequer was empty, and a bear absolutely indispensable, scrupled not to sell the church Bible to accomplish his purpose. Hence, Who sold their Bible to buy a Bear? rouses the indignation of Congleton to this day.' In the neighbourhood of Borrowdale, in Cumberland, we remember attempting the like experiment (with the most dangerous results) by inquiring at a village revel, 'Who built in the Cuckoo?'—the Borrowdalian, it is said, having attempted to secure for themselves a perpetual summer by erecting a wall (without a roof) around that smoothly prophesying bird.

The Black Country itself has no legends; but only a few popular sayings, which have more fact than imagination about them. One of them, with relation to two out of the three great classes of the district—the 'butties,' who direct the working of the mine, and the 'doggies,' who are their subordinates—affirms that 'the butty is hired to swear at the doggy, and the doggy to swear at the men.' This axiom, like every other, if expressed in the provincial dialect, would sound exceedingly different. "Dra' me another hafe pint," says a rustic. "Here I are," shout the children playing in the road. "Hey! bobber, where be you a gween?" inquires the rustic of a neighbour who enters panting with heat; bobber being the equivalent of chum. "I beant a gween nowheres," answers the new-comer; and, after cooling his throat, puts a question concerning the health of a haymaker with, "I was a gween tew ax ye," and so forth. "Dear heart!" breaks in the hostess, "I'm sorry to hear him's no better."

The popular poetry of the Black Country, if, at least, we may judge from the specimens which fell upon the wandering ears of Mr White, is not so pathetic as to be enervating—

'Come all you ladies, drest in white,  
Come all you sailors, drest in black,  
From the cabbie-boy to the main-mast high,  
Pray shed a tear for my sailor b'y.'

Even the sentiment of this hard-working district seems to take a correspondingly practical turn. 'A man

sitting on a gate, whom I complimented upon his happy looks as proof that work agreed with him, answered laughing: "Tis some at besides work: I eats a few butcher's chips every week; them's the things for looking happy on." The same economy of epithets and ideas seems to exist in their religious hymns, as of time and material in their terrestrial avocations—

'As Oi sot on a sunny bonk,  
A sunny bonk, a sunny bonk,  
As Oi sot on a sunny bonk  
On Christmas dee in t' mornin';  
Oi saw thray ships coom seelin' boy,  
Coom seelin' boy, coom seelin' boy,  
Oi saw thray ships coom seelin' boy  
On Christmas dee in t' mornin'.

'And hew should bay in thase thray ships,  
In thase thray ships, in thase thray ships,  
And hew should bay in thase thray ships?  
But Joseph and his fair leddy.  
And hay did whistle, and shay did sing,  
And all the bells on airth did ring,  
For joy that the Saviour, hay was bawn,  
On Christmas dee in t' mornin'.

The lodging accommodations for amateur pedestrians in these localities are by no means good. Mr White can never get the people in the inns to rise early enough to let him out in the mornings. As he let himself out of one of them, a miner, who is waiting in the street, runs up to him for two pennyworth of gin, in vain—there is nobody astir who can purvey that necessary. In London, one can get gin at cock-crow, if one's fancy lies that way; while the country, that esteems itself so very exemplary, is still snoring in bed, I have sometimes accomplished one-half of my day's work, and come to a resting-place before the breakfast-things were cleared away.

There is variety enough in Mr White's travelling acquaintances: he visits the Benedictines of St Bernard's Abbey, in Loughborough, one day, and combats their theological opinions; while on the next he does battle upon the highway with a Methodist preacher.

'Approaching a sharp bend in the road, I heard a voice beyond the hedge singing a hymn with cheerful note, and knowing the tune, I lifted up my voice, and chimed in with a bass. At the bend there met me a young man who, holding an open hymn-book in his hand, evidently enjoyed his exercise. "Are you going straight away to heaven?" I asked, with a smile, as we both stood still.

"Yes," he answered; "will you go with me?"

"What would you say if I should wish to go to Wem first?"

"I'd say you'd better go with me."

"Why—are you a local preacher?"

"Well—I am a local preacher; and if you go with me, you shall hear something that's most worth thinking about."

"And what's that?"

"Going to heaven."

"And is it that which a man ought most to think about?"

'He looked at me in utter amazement, and replied: "How would you like to be put into one of them great blazing furnaces where they melt iron?"

"I shouldn't like it at all."

"Well, then!"

"Well, then!" and we stood looking one at the other.

'He returned to the charge with, "You had better come and hear me preach."

"Where?—In one of those little places which you country-folk describe as nice and close?"

"Well, it will be pretty warm to-day."

"That is one reason why I can't accept your invitation: another is, that I can't put trust in sermons

preached in a foul atmosphere. Moreover, it seems to me that many people distress themselves about going to heaven, who take but little heed to their way of life on earth. I will go and hear you when you recognise the necessity for fresh air and plenty of it; when you discern rightly the dependence between here and hereafter; when the wife who hears you shall understand that thrift and cleanliness in house and family are a part of Christian duty; when the village-grocer shall do unto his customers that which he would they should do unto him; when the labourer, digging a ditch in a far-away field all by himself, shall work as diligently, and finish-off as carefully, as if his master were standing by. If I mistake not, these would be acceptable as first steps on the journey to which you invite me."

"I held out my hand: he took it, but with a doubtful shake of his head; and so we parted."

The best and most cheering part of Mr Walter White's volume, however, is that which treats of the religious and moral improvement in this same sunless Black Country. The good that was done by the late Joseph Sturge, and is now being done by his representatives, in their First-day Schools, is vast indeed, and produces the best results, even to the extent of civilising the manners, and that not by books of etiquette, but through the teaching of the heart within. "What the results are may be seen in their diligent attendance at the school, in their behaviour one towards another, in their daily work, and in their homes. "If our teacher ain't ashamed to stop and shake hands with us, o' worky-days, and ask us how we are getting on, surely the least we can do is to be civil among ourselves;" such is the sentiment. And "When our teacher calls on us, he knocks at the door; don't come bouncin' in, as if he was somebody; so let us knock where we call."

Here is a journeyman gunmaker's account of the 'two ways of living,' striking in itself, and curiously illustrative, by the way, of those recreations, now habitual to the people of the Black Country, which were, until of late years, confined to a far higher class.

"I've tried both ways o' livin', and I know all about it."

"What do you mean by both ways of living?"

"Well, you see, me and my brother was brought up reg'lar bad. Father was a good workman, and I've know'd him earn four pound of a sober week; but he never give us no learnin' woth speakin' of, and our house wasn't fit for anybody to come into. He spent so much money, and idled away his time so, that sometimes mother haven't had the value of a loaf of bread, nor enough to buy a Sunday's dinner; so she went to work at a screw-factory, and we four children done jest as we liked; and when I was nine, father took me to help him at the works. He might 'a rode in his carriage a'most, if he'd on'y a bin a sober man. He died quite a old man at forty-seven, and mother was better off without him than with him. I soon left home after I was fourteen, and got lodgin's, and went on bad enough for 'ears; lost time every week, and didn't care for nothin' till I was about twenty, when I kept company with the young 'ooman as is my wife, and she says: "I'll never get married till you are stiddier, and begins to save a bit;" and she could read and write. I couldn't hardly read; so says she: "And why don't you learn to read? A man ain't nothin' as can't read, let alone writin'." So I went to Severn Street School, and that was the means o' my bein' stiddier, and now I don't want for nothin'. I puts by five shillin' a week, and don't miss it. Some o' my old acquaintance calls me a dull, slow sort o' customer, but I know how to enjoy myself. I got my garden; that's a'lays a pleasure; and last summer, me and my wife, and the children, went to Warwick and Leamin'ton: we see all over Warwick Castle, and never enjoyed nothin' more in our lives. It

coses a smart bit o' money to go out with three or four children; but not much more 'n I've often spent on myself in a week's spree. Then I had a week myself at the Isle o' Man, and this 'ear, I mean goin' to Wales. Then you see we don't want for nothin' here at home, and things goes comfortable like with us."

We have no space for mere local description, or we should gladly give Mr White's account of 'the Hard-ware Village,' as being the best word-picture of Birmingham with which we are acquainted—a place truly amazing, if it were but for the ridiculous cheapness of some of its wares. 'Here for three-halfpence you may buy a candlestick, a pair of snuffers for threepence, a fender for ninepence, a dozen saucepans for three shillings, a knife and fork for threepence, half-a-dozen nickel-silver spoons for threepence; and what school-boy would go knifeless where pocket-knives, with two blades, can be had for twopence a-piece?' Verily, in the Black Country and all the district round about it, it may be said with greater truth than elsewhere, that Man has sought out many inventions. It seems to be one vast hothouse of mechanical ingenuity, and if producing little else of an intellectual sort, to bring forth *that* to perfection. 'So numerous are the instances of invention and designing, that you might almost believe the faculty begotten of mere residence!'

Mr White may not have made the tour most agreeable to his own feelings and love for natural beauties, in his walk *All Round the Wrekin*, but we believe it is that which will be found most instructive and interesting to his many readers.

## THE VESPER-HOUR,

ON THE COAST OF NORMANDY.

CALMLY fades the light of day—  
Faintly sighs the breeze away—  
Music steals from every bower:  
'Tis the lonely vesper-hour.

Pilgrims sad, and hoary men,  
Chant their beads twice o'er again—  
Sunset's rays now dimly lower  
O'er the pensive vesper-hour.

Twilight mourns in silver gray  
Daylight's last remaining ray,  
Weeping gems—a pearly dower—  
Pale and mystic vesper-hour.

Fairies from their mossy glade,  
Seeking vales now cast in shade,  
Sprinkle o'er each closing flower  
Tears, that cool the vesper-hour.

Spirit of the azure air!  
Veiled in hues so soft, so fair,  
Weep, for transient is thy power  
At this balmy vesper-hour.

Now, adieu! thy beauty dies,  
And entombed with day it lies;  
Night now comes—gone is thy power,  
Sad and dreamy vesper-hour! Z.

Printed and Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, 47 Paternoster Row, LONDON, and 339 High Street, EDINBURGH. Also sold by WILLIAM ROBERTSON, 23 Upper Sackville Street, DUBLIN, and all Booksellers.